

# Blind Products Test

## ● Status

- **The recent evolution in product testing practices indicates a certain confusion between sensorial analysis methods and "naïve consumer" tests.**  
In particular, we are witnessing increasingly frequent use of hall tests and comparative procedures. While these techniques are relevant in certain cases, they can sometimes turn out to be highly debatable because :

- placing the consumer outside his/her usual context can remove all relevance from his/her opinion,
- wanting to parametrize the conditions of a test runs counter to the multi-form reality of consumption and can limit the consumer's capacity to judge,
- most consumers do not drink their coffee at a precise temperature, in a white cup; do not respect the recommended dose and do not use mineral water to prepare it !

- **The key objective of a blind product test is to obtain from consumers a measure of their "hedonistic evaluation"**  
One should not extend beyond the analytical capacities of a "naïve consumer" who, through a lack of experience and vocabulary, is usually incapable of explaining his/her overall evaluation. We will therefore focus on revealing **product profiles limited to those dimensions perceptible by the consumer, in order to :**
  - understand the reasons for product evaluation,
  - avoid comparing two products which have achieved identical hedonistic scores but are perceived differently,
  - have databanks available to validate the improvement of products in terms of their essential dimensions.

## ● Choosing the test procedure

There are several test procedures and the most relevant choice is obviously essential. This choice must be made taking the products and the objectives into account.

Monadic	Comparative	Monadic Sequential	Protomonadic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single product</li> <li>• Evaluation in the absolute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 products and more</li> <li>• Judgement of preferences</li> </ul>	Monadic phases staggered over time : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First product in the absolute (with rotation)</li> <li>• Second product in the absolute</li> <li>• Possibly further products</li> </ul>	Monadic phase then comparative phase : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First product in the absolute (with rotation)</li> <li>• Comparative test between the two products then preference</li> </ul>

In our experience, the monadic approach often turns out to be the most relevant because it enables :

- a judgement close to reality, expressed in relation to the relevant reference: the usual product,
- "pure" results, non-biased by the effects of sequence (the 2nd product is judged in rto the 1st),
- the possibility of constituting reliable databases, across all samples.

## ● **Choosing the test location**

Home test	Hall test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditions close to consumption reality</li> <li>• Sufficient quantity consumed, with no risk of saturation</li> <li>• Comparison reference: the usual product</li> </ul> <p>-&gt; Ideal situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows for artificial research plans (concealed variables, control of implementation)</li> <li>• Well-suited to some products</li> <li>• Allows for comparative approaches</li> <li>• Limited timelines and costs</li> </ul> <p>-&gt; A "Attractive" approach under certain <b>conditions</b></p>

In a home test, the monadic procedure is optimal, whereas in a hall test, the comparative procedure may be necessary :

- The home test involves the use of the usual product as an implicit reference and the addition of another product to be tested perturbs judgement.
- The hall test does not allow reference to be made to habits and, therefore, to the usual product. The comparative test enables judgement to be reassessed

## ● **Questionnaire**

The classic questionnaire comprises :

- An overall evaluation mark
- An open-ended question enabling the overall mark to be explained spontaneously
- The positioning of the product according to a few attributes, which ideally should have been the subject of specific work (qualitative generation then quantitative reduction) so as to collect information that is reliable, sensitive and discriminating.

## ● **Sample**

This should be sufficiently large: between 120 and 200 individuals for the monadic tests.

It should ensure good regional dispersion.

It should be meticulously controlled: inspection of the quality of fieldwork (re-reading, telephone checks...) and of the sample structure (filters, quotas, matching criteria...).